



## MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Isiah Leggett  
*County Executive*

Thomas W. Carr, Jr.  
*Fire Chief*

Attention Contractors, Architects, and Engineers:

Design drawings do not always provide all the construction details necessary to complete a project. This letter is an attempt to clearly describe what is required when these situations arise. Some examples are penetrations or shafts that are difficult to complete due to field conditions, altered listed details, or details omitted from the design package.

The inspector is only required to determine if an installation meets a design detail. It is not the inspector's responsibility to determine if a design detail is adequate. If an installation does not match a detail, the inspector may reject it or request an engineering judgment. An engineering judgment is a letter that is signed and sealed by a fire protection engineer who is registered in the State of Maryland. This letter must include the following:

- 1) Date
- 2) Identification of the problem
- 3) Detailed written description of the proposed solution
- 4) Statement of the design intent of the proposal (e.g. 1-hour rated wall assembly)
- 5) Statement of how the proposal meets the design intent (e.g. How the 1-hour rating achieved)
- 6) Detailed sketch
- 7) Engineering seal on all pages

Engineering judgments shall be reviewed and approved by the engineering staff of the Fire Marshal's Office. All review time will be billed at the engineering rate, and invoices will be sent to the person who seals the judgment. Once approved, the judgment will be stamped and an approval letter will be attached. The original letter should be kept on site and produced at the request of the inspector.

The need for an engineering judgment may be identified by the contractor or architect prior to the request of an inspector, in which case, the judgment can be drafted ahead of time to avoid project delays. The substitution of an alternate, appropriate listed assembly does not require an Engineering Judgment.

Regards,

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